(c) what is the sample failure rate reported by all companies to Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority;

(d) what was the overall content of Benzene in the above samples; and

(e) whether CSE has ever tried to found out the Aromatic compound content in the present petroleum fuel of commercial grade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) CSE report indicates that the failure rate of samples is about 8.3%.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) The benzene content in samples taken by CSE was found to be as indicated below:-

* 0.5-0.7% of benzene content in 4% of samples
* 0.8-0.9% of benzene content in 38% of samples
* 1% of benzene content in 24% of samples
* 1-1.5% of benzene content in 26% of samples
* Above 1.5% of benzene content in 8% of samples

(e) It is not clear from their report whether they have tried to find out the aromatic compound content in the present petroleum fuel of commercial grade.

Acquisition of oilfields in Sudan and Oman

4334. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
SHRI YADLAPATI VEKNAT RAO:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC-VIDESH proposed to acquire oilfields in foreign countries like Sudan and Oman; and

(b) if so, whether Sudan is a safe investment place in view of state sponsored terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) ONGC-Videsh Ltd. (OVL), a 100% subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), was set up mainly to acquire exploration blocks and discovered fields abroad and is actively pursuing investment opportunities in various countries, including Sudan and Oman. While evaluating any project, OVL taken into account various risks on account of political, regional social, commercial, business, legal, technical and environmental factors.

Impact of EEZ on Crude Production

4335. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all off-shore installations of the ONGC and other oil exploration companies engaged in off-shore explorations would be treated as part of Domestic Tariff Area (DTA), as a result of the recent Government decision to bring the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf under the jurisdiction of the Customs Act, 1962; and

(b) if so, in what manner this will affect the cost structure of the crude production of ONGC and others engaged in off-shore exploration; and how the cost of production of crude by them would compare with international crude production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has issued a Notification No. 157 on 7.2.02 under clause (a) of Sub-section (6) of Section 6 and clause (a) of sub-section (7) of Section 7 of the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Act, 1976 (80 of 1976) extending the Customs Act, 1962 and Customs Tariff Act, 1975 to the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone of India with effect from the date of publication of the notification in the Official Gazette *i.e.* 11.2.2002.

(b) The cost of production of crude oil and natural gas depends amongst other factors on the fiscal regime, comprising royalty, customs duty etc. In the offshore areas, while Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is liable to pay the applicable customs duty on procurements for its areas allotted on nomination basis, no customs duty is payable on procurements by the